

U.S. Puts 3 Civilians In Key Regional Posts

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SAIGON, Dec. 3—Three top American civilians were named regional directors under Deputy Ambassador William J. Porter today in the most important assignments made to date under the reorganization of the American Mission.

The three are Assistant Deputy Ambassador Henry L. T. Koren, 55; a deputy AID regional director, John Paul Vann, 42, and a Foreign Service officer currently working as an aide to Porter, Vincent Heyman, 46.

They will become the senior civilian officials in the regions and counterparts to the powerful Vietnamese corps commanders. Koren will go to the I Corps, Vann to the III Corps, and Heyman to the IV Corps in the Delta. The II Corps director has yet to be named.

The appointments surprised observers here, who had expected that relatively junior men would be named to the posts. As it happened, each man was personally selected by Porter without regard to rank or the Foreign Service or AID selection system. Koren is a senior diplomat, Vann an outspoken former lieutenant colonel, and Heyman a relatively obscure, if senior, staff aide.

The region directors, or civilian corps commanders, will report directly to Porter and have under their control all civilian efforts relating to "Revolutionary Development," the Vietnamese-American scheme for pacifying the country. These include the AID program, the psychological warfare and information programs of the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO), and the pacification activities of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The directors, it was understood, would shortly be naming civilian chiefs of each province. When this happens, the Americans will thus have created parallel lines of authority, one civilian and the other military.

The Vietnamese government itself is an odd hybrid, with authority shared between the

generals in Saigon and the corps commands. The civilian bureaucracy often works outside both, when it works at all.

It was partly this situation, partly the increasingly obvious "fragmentation" of the civilian effort, that the mission sought to correct with its Nov. 23 directive placing all Revolutionary Development activities under an Office for Operations headed by Porter and a newly named assistant, L. Wade Lathram.

Now the civilians will duplicate both the American military bureaucracy, which has representatives at corps and province, and sometimes district levels, and the Vietnamese bureaucracy.

The parallelism was thought here to be essential because the American effort has both military and "civilian" components.

3 Civilian Agencies

The civilians had been split into three operational agencies—AID, JUSPAO, and the CIA—without central operational control either in Saigon or in the provinces, except in the person of Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. The result was that both the military and the civilian efforts had resulted in a gradual erosion of civilian influence. The American military command was thought to be picking up the pieces.

That, at least, was the view of many observers here, and when the reorganization was announced late last month there were indications that if it did not succeed the military command would take charge of pacification, or "Revolutionary Development."

The most interesting appointment today was that of Koren, who as Assistant Deputy Ambassador was No. 3 man in the American mission and the man directly below Deputy Ambassador Porter.

65,000 men of the 3rd Marine amphibious force. Walt is under the command of Gen. William C. Westmoreland, but has exercised independent authority in the past.

The senior civilian in the I Corps had been the U.S. Consul General, Thomas Corcoran, who had acted as political adviser to Walt. Now Koren, who has been Ambassador to the Congo (Brazzaville), undertakes that role not as an adviser but as an equal.

Vann, who will become Regional Director in the II Corps, is one of the legendary Americans in Vietnam. He was

in the Army for 21 years, ten of them in the Far East, and retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1963 after two years as senior military adviser for eight Delta provinces between Saigon and Cantho.

After a tour in private business, Vann returned to Vietnam in February, 1965, to work for the AID mission. He has been chief of the planning and projects division in AID and deputy director of its field operations.

Heyman, named director of the IV Corps, is a Brooklyn-born Foreign Service officer who has served in Paris and the Far East. He has been in Vietnam 15 months, most of the time at the Revolutionary Development cadre training center at Vungtau. He has been Porter's chief aide for the Delta.

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